

Des Moines to host the Solheim Cup

http://espn.go.com/golf/story/_/id/9712577/2017-solheim-cup-awarded-des-moines-golf-country-club-iowa

WEST DES MOINES, Iowa -- The LPGA's biggest tournament is coming to Iowa as the 2017 Solheim Cup will be played at the Des Moines Golf and Country Club, it was announced Monday.

The biennial contest between teams of European and American golfers was held in Colorado last month with Europe winning 18-10.

The Solheim Cup, which features 12 golfers on each team in a match-play format, will be in Germany in 2015 before going to Iowa.

LPGA commissioner Michael Whan said that Iowa's history of supporting major golf events -- most notably the 250,000 fans the course drew for the U.S. Senior Open Championship in 1999 -- played a key role in its selection.

"I believe in 2017, we're going to blow the standard out of the water of what a Solheim Cup should be," Whan said. "That's going to come from a course. That's going to come from a city. That's going to come from a state. Most importantly, that's going to come from a people that respect the game and respect the country."

The Solheim Cup will be arguably the most prestigious golf tournament ever held in central Iowa.

In addition to the U.S. Senior Open Championship in 1999, Metro Des Moines has hosted a Champions Tour event, the Principal Charity Classic, since 2001.

Though that tournament moved from Glen Oaks Country Club in West Des Moines to the Wakonda Club near downtown Des Moines this year, it remained among the more well-attended events on the senior tour.

The PGA makes a yearly stop in Silvis, Ill., just across the Mississippi River, for the John Deere Classic -- although that the field for that event is typically thin because it falls a week before the Open Championship.

"We look forward to getting to know you much better, and we're really excited about the fact that you're coming back in 2017. I'm delighted that our state will be the home of the 2017 Solheim Cup," Iowa governor Terry Branstad said. "Iowans are well-known for their generosity, their strong sense of community and their welcoming attitude."

Officials broke the news with all the American pomp and circumstance it could muster.

Dozens of school children dressed up in red, white and blue -- many with stars and stripes hats on their heads -- and the few hundred people that showed up were all handed small American flags.

Whan topped it off by tossing Solheim Cup hats to fans as they chanted "USA! USA!"

The jingoistic theme had a very specific purpose. The LPGA is hoping that lowans turn out in record numbers -- and treat it more like a football game than a golf tournament.

"I don't really care what players are playing on the team. I don't care what media shows up," Whan said. "Just do us one favor. Do these players one favor. Throw away the 'Quiet Please' signs. Paint your face. Get crazy."

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